Spring 2021

Barriers to Educational Resources: The Effect of Disability Disclosure on Ratings of a Scholarship Applicant

Yichuan Yin

Western Washington University, yyin1998@gmail.com

Barriers to Educational Resources: The Effect of Disability Disclosure on Ratings of a Scholarship Applicant

By

Yichuan Yin

Accepted in Partial Completion
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of _Science_

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Dr. Kristi Lemm, Chair

Dr. Alex Czopp

Dr. Brent Mallinckrodt

GRADUATE SCHOOL

David L. Patrick, Dean

Master's Thesis

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a master's degree at Western Washington University, I grant to Western Washington University the non-exclusive royalty-free right to archive, reproduce, distribute, and display the thesis in any and all forms, including electronic format, via any digital library mechanisms maintained by WWU.

I represent and warrant this is my original work, and does not infringe or violate any rights of others. I warrant that I have obtained written permissions from the owner of any third party copyrighted material included in these files.

I acknowledge that I retain ownership rights to the copyright of this work, including but not limited to the right to use all or part of this work in future works, such as articles or books.

Library users are granted permission for individual, research and non-commercial reproduction of this work for educational purposes only. Any further digital posting of this document requires specific permission from the author.

Any copying or publication of this thesis for commercial purposes, or for financial gain, is not allowed without my written permission.

Yichuan Yin

04/28/2021

Barriers to Educational Resources: The Effect of Disability Disclosure on Ratings of a Scholarship Applicant

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of
Western Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science

by
Yichuan Yin
April 2021

Abstract

We investigated how a disclosure of an applicant's blindness would influence evaluations of applicants to a scholarship and whether disclosure early or late in the impression formation process would result in optimal application outcomes. A total of 356 participants read profiles of applicants whose qualifications were clearly strong, clearly weak, or mixed (diligent but unintelligent, or intelligent but lazy). Participants were told that the applicant was blind either at the at the beginning or at the end, or no disability was disclosed. We found that surprisingly, blind applicants were rated more positively than those without a disclosure, and the benefit of disclosing blindness was particularly salient when the applicants' qualifications were weak or ambiguous. The results suggest that the benefit of disclosing blindness at the end of impression formation is better than doing it at the beginning of impression formation.

Table of Contents

Abstract iv

List of Tables and Figures vi

Introduction 1

Method 12

Results 16

Discussion 20

Works Cited 28

Appendix A 35

Appendix B 42

Appendix C 49

Appendix D 56

Appendix E 63

List of Figures

Figure 1: Predicted Main Effect of Disability Disclosure on Evaluations..... 9

Figure 2: Predicted Pattern of Expression of Aversive Ablism.....10

Figure 3: Predicted Main Effect of Disability Disclosure on Ratings of Importance of Criteria ..11

Figure 4: Predicted Main Effect of Time of Disability Disclosure on Evaluations.....11

Figure 5: Predicted Interaction between Time of Disability Disclosure and Qualifications 12

Figure 6: Aversive Ablism.....18

Figure 7: Interaction between Time of Disability Disclosure and Qualifications 20

Introduction

Access to higher education plays an important role in employment opportunities, income, and quality of life. However, data suggest that high school students in the U.S. with disabilities are significantly less likely to start postsecondary education than are their peers without disabilities: only 19.2% of students with disabilities transition to postsecondary education compared to 80.8% of their peers without disabilities (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). Consequently, despite the fact that discrimination against individuals with disabilities in the workplaces has been prohibited in the U.S. since the legislation of Disabilities Act of 1990, disabled individuals are still significantly less likely to be employed, with the employment rate for individuals with a disability being 33.4%, compared to 75.6% for their peers without a disability (Erickson et al., 2014). Therefore, enabling students with disabilities to have greater accesses to higher education opportunities is essential to the enhancement of well-being of individuals with disabilities.

Attitudes toward Individuals with Disabilities

Why are disabled students less likely to go to college? There are many possible reasons, such as financial hardship or poor academic performance (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). However, pervasive negative stereotypes against disabled students must also have a significant impact. In fact, abundant research has shown the prevalence of stereotypes against individuals with disabilities (Dalgin & Bellin, 2008; Fiske et al., 2002; Rohmer & Louvet, 2012, 2018). For instance, Dalgin and Bellin (2008) asked sixty employers to make hiring decisions and rate the candidates' employability after reading short interview vignettes of potential candidates with a physical disability, a psychiatric disability, or no disability. At an explicit level, they found that individuals with disabilities were significantly less likely to be

hired and were rated as less employable than those without a disability. At an implicit level, Yin and Lemm (2020) employed six Implicit Association Tests (IAT; Greenwald et al, 1998) to measure participants' implicit attitudes toward individuals with deafness, blindness, and mobility impairment and found that individuals with these disabilities were all viewed as cold and incompetent, relative to non-disabled individuals. Furthermore, Ravaud and colleagues (1992) conducted an experiment on a representative sample of more than 2,228 companies in a natural social setting. They mailed unsolicited job applications to employers. In one half of the applications, it mentioned that the applicant had paraplegia, and in the other applications, there was no mention of a disability. They found that applicants without a disability were three times more likely to receive a favorable response than their counterparts described as having a physical disability, and discrimination became more marked as company sizes increased. In addition, many studies using survey measures found negative beliefs about individuals with disabilities in the workplace including perceptions of them as dependent, incompetent, and unproductive (Colella, De Nisi, & Varma, 1998; Fichten & Amsel, 1986; Gouvier, Sytsma-Jorolan, & Mayville, 2003; Louvet, 2007; Louvet & Rohmer, 2011). Thus, we hypothesize that in general, college applicants described as having disabilities will receive lower ratings and will be deemed as less likely to be accepted for their school application.

Interaction between Disability Disclosure and Applicant's Strength on Ratings

In recent decades, many societies have developed strong egalitarian traditions and norms promoting social equality, and the impact of these egalitarian norms has been demonstrated in experimental (Roese & Jamieson, 1993) and survey (Kluegel & Smith, 1986) research. Consequently, most people are reluctant to openly express their negative attitudes toward individuals from minority groups, and overt expression of prejudice has declined significantly

over the past 35 years (Pearson & Dovidio, 2019). Aversive racism, proposed by Gaertner and Dovidio in 1986, is hypothesized to characterize the racial attitudes of many Whites who endorse egalitarian values, but who discriminate in subtle, rationalized ways. According to the aversive-racism framework, contemporary stereotypes are expressed in indirect ways that do not threaten the aversive racist's nonprejudiced egalitarian self-image. Since aversive racists consciously recognize and endorse egalitarian values, they will not exhibit their stereotypes in situations in which discrimination would be obvious to others and themselves. However, because aversive racists still possess negative feelings triggered by their ingrained stereotypes, discrimination occurs when bias is not obvious or can be rationalized on the basis of some factor other than race.

In support of the aversive-racism framework, Dovidio and Gaertner (2000) conducted a comparison between two studies conducted in 1989 and 1999. In both studies, participants were first asked to complete a questionnaire assessing their racial prejudice, and then they read a brief description of an ostensibly new peer counselling program and evaluated the qualifications of either a Black or a White candidate. Each participant was randomly assigned to evaluate a clearly strong, a clearly weak, or a moderate candidate. The candidate with strong qualifications was portrayed as sensitive, intelligent, and relaxed; the candidate with weak qualifications was portrayed as independent, forthright, and intense; the candidate with moderate qualifications was portrayed as sensitive, intelligent, and emotional. They found that self-reported prejudice decreased from 1989 to 1999, and at both time periods, relative to White candidates, Black candidates were not discriminated against when the candidates' qualifications were clearly strong or weak. However, when the candidate had moderate qualifications, Black candidates were rated as less qualified and received weaker recommendations relative to White candidates,

suggesting that Black candidates were discriminated against when the appropriate decisions were more ambiguous.

Consistent with the aversive racism framework, people may rationalize their discrimination through defining the criteria used to assess merit flexibly in a manner congenial to the idiosyncratic strength of individuals who belong to the desired group. For instance, Uhlmann and Cohen (2005) asked participants to read the description of either a male or a female candidate for the traditionally male job of police chief. The applicants' areas of strength and weakness were manipulated: the applicants were portrayed as either "streetwise" (i.e., experienced) but not well-educated or as well-educated but not streetwise. They found that, unsurprisingly, participants provided male applicants with more favorable hiring evaluations, and more interestingly, that participants defined criteria of merit in a manner that favored the male applicant but not the female one. For instance, when a male applicant was portrayed as well-educated but not experienced, participants rated the level of education as more important than past experience for a police chief; when a female applicant was also portrayed as well-educated but not experienced, participants rated past experience as more important than level of education for a police chief.

To the best of our knowledge, no published research has applied the aversive racism framework to individuals with disabilities, but it seems reasonable to expect that the pattern of aversive prejudice - greater discrimination when qualifications are ambiguous than when qualifications are unambiguous – may also emerge when the target has a disability – aversive ablism. However, the pattern may not be as strong for a target with a disability compared to target who is a racial minority. Although we expect participants to show discrimination against a disabled target with ambiguous qualifications, we also expect to see some discrimination even

when the target's qualifications are unambiguously strong or weak, since recent research suggests that overt expressions of prejudice against individuals with disabilities are still prevalent (e.g., Rohmer & Louvet, 2012, 2018; McDonnal & Antonelli, 2018).

In the current study, we aimed to apply the psychological processes suggested by the aversive-racism framework to attitudes toward individuals with disabilities. Derived from the aversive-racism framework, we hypothesized that in contexts in which the qualifications of individuals with disabilities are clear (clearly strong or clearly weak), individuals with disabilities would be discriminated against relatively less because discrimination is generally socially undesirable in today's society. However, in contexts which the qualifications of individuals with disabilities are ambiguous, we predicted that discrimination would be greater because people can rationalize their stereotyping behaviors as "proper decisions" that are not motivated by prejudice. Furthermore, we predicted people would rationalize their discrimination through changing the credentials that they view as important to the position in a manner that favors the individuals without a disability but not the ones with a disability. To be specific, we asked participants to rate applicants to a scholarship, and we hypothesized that if the applicant with disabilities was high in intelligence but low in diligence or high in diligence but low in intelligence, participants would rate his weakness (e.g. diligence or intelligence) as a more important criterion for being awarded the scholarship.

The Interaction between Time of Disclosure and Applicant's Strength on Ratings

For applicants who choose to disclose a disability, another important consideration is the timing of disability disclosure. According to a survey conducted by the Office of Disability Employment Policy (2017), since disclosing disabilities is a prerequisite for receiving proper accommodations to maximize successful functioning, many individuals with disabilities choose

to disclose their disabilities to their potential employers or schools in their application to confirm they can receive their deserved accommodations. In addition, many individuals with a disability consider their physical conditions as an important component of their identities. They are unwilling to disguise their disabilities because they do not want to oppress their identifies. Consequently, when to disclose disabilities to achieve the optimal application outcomes becomes an important question. Theories of impression formation assert that initial impressions are not easily updated when receiving new information (Petty et al., 2006; Rydell & McConnell, 2006). These theories postulate that even when earlier information about a new person is dismissed or invalidated, it can still be activated in memory and guide our impressions. For example, Gregg and colleagues (2006) found that when participants had formed impressions about two novel groups, learning new information about these groups did not lead to updates of their impression about these groups. Therefore, we hypothesize that if people's stereotypes against disabled individuals are activated by disability disclosure prior to impression formation, later positive information about the applicants may not be sufficient to reverse their initial negative stereotype-based impressions. Conversely, if people have already formed a positive impression of an individual based on individuating information, the individual's later disclosure of a disability will not have as big of an effect on their impressions of that individual. Moreover, we can also derive theoretical support from schema theory, which posits that schemas act like a filter in such a way that expectancy-congruent information is preferentially encoded into memory because it is easier to assimilate or integrate within existing knowledge structure than expectancy-incongruent information (Taylor & Crocker, 1981). For instance, Bodenhausen and Wyer (1985) asked participants to read a case file describing a transgression committed by a target, and in some cases, the target's transgression was stereotypic of the target's ethnic group, and in other cases, it

was not. Participants were later asked to recall the information about the target. They found that less information was recalled when the target's offense was not stereotypic of his ethnicity. Derived from the schema theory, we hypothesized that in the scholarship applications, when the individuals have strong qualifications, the schema about a highly qualified student is activated, and thus, later disclosure of their disabilities provides information that is incongruent with expectancy for a highly qualified student. Consequently, we predicted that people's positive impressions formed about the applicants would not be greatly damaged by stereotypes against individuals with disabilities. Similarly, when a negative schema about an individual with disabilities is activated by applicants' disclosure of disabilities, later positive information about the competitiveness of these applicants will not largely enhance people's formed negative impressions about these applicants either, leading to a discrepancy between people's impressions about these strong applicants with disabilities. However, since individuals with disabilities are typically viewed as low in competence and intelligence, the time of disability disclosure should not matter when the applicants are weak because the later information will always be expectancy-congruent, and thus, later information about the applicants can always be encoded without any disturbance. In summary, derived from both theoretical frameworks, we hypothesized an interaction between timing of disability disclosure and strength of the applicants on their ratings. Specifically, we hypothesized that when the applicants are strong, participants in the disclosure last condition would give higher ratings to applicants with a disability than those in the disclosure first condition; when the applicants are weak, we predicted be no differences in participants' ratings of the applicants in the disclosure first and disclosure last condition.

The Present Study

In the current study, we aimed to explore the impact of people's stereotypes against individuals with disabilities on their access to educational resources. To be specific, we investigated the effect of the timing of college scholarship applicants' disclosures of disabilities (Disclosure First, Disclosure Last, or No Disclosure) and the qualifications of applicants (clearly strong, clearly weak, high in diligence but low in intelligence, or high in intelligence but low in diligence) on participants' overall ratings of these applicants and their estimation of applicants' likelihood of being awarded the scholarship. We asked each participant to read the application profiles of three applicants to a college scholarship, and we manipulated applicants' physical condition and levels of qualification through their self-introduction, comments from their instructors, and transcripts.

In addition, we acknowledge that the research about attitudes toward people with disabilities has lumped multiple types of disabilities into a single category, but we think it is important to study attitudes toward different types of disability separately because individuals with different types of disabilities are influenced by their disabilities in different ways. Given the fact that it was impossible for us to include all types of disabilities in our study, we decided to study attitudes toward individuals with blindness specifically for this study. This is because there is some evidence showing that individuals with blindness are viewed more negatively than those with other types of disabilities (Yin & Lemm, 2020). For instance, several studies have documented that employers have more concerns about hiring individuals who are blind or visually impaired than hiring people with other disabilities (Chen et al., 2016; Fuqua, Rathbun, & Gade, 1984; Gilbride et al., 2000; Inglis, 2006). Since it is the first study of our line of research, we wanted to see the largest effect.

Hypotheses

H1: We predicted that, compared with the No Disclosure conditions, applicants who disclose a disability (Disclosure First and Disclosure Last) would receive lower ratings and lower estimated probability of being accepted (main effect of a disability disclosure).

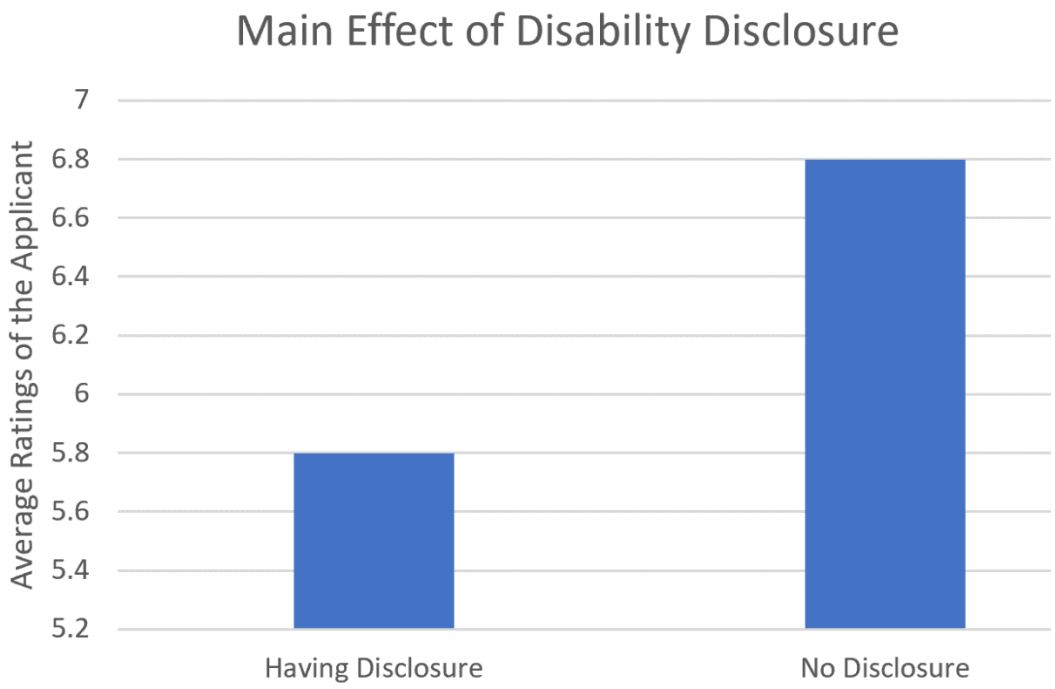

Figure 1

H2: We predicted that the discrepancy in ratings of applicants between disability disclosure and no disclosure would be larger for applicants with ambiguous qualifications compared to those with clearly strong or weak applications (aversive ablism).

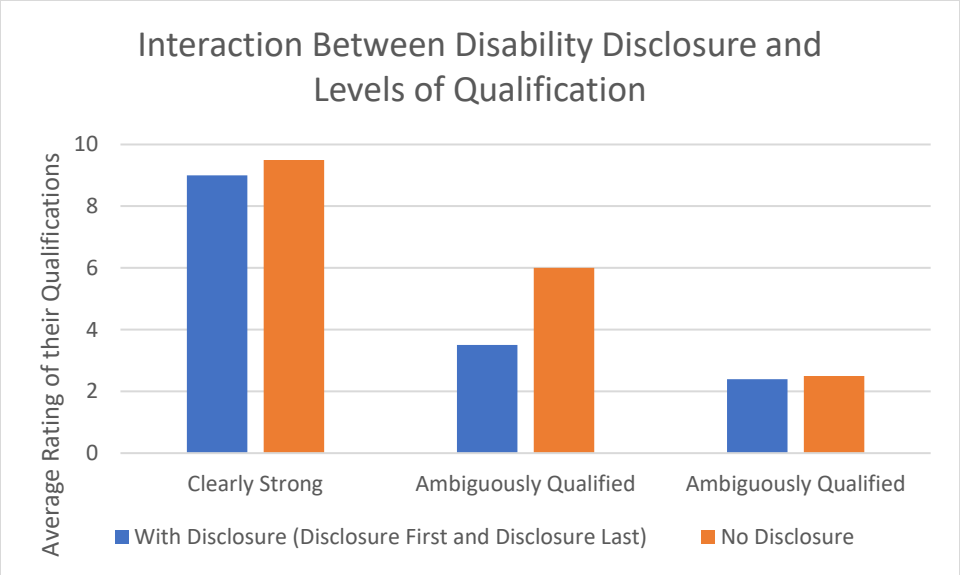

Figure 2

H3: We predicted that, when there was a disability disclosure, participants would rate the weakness of the applicant as a more important criterion for being awarded the scholarship; when there was not a disability disclosure, there would not be a preference for the weakness of the participants. For instance, when the applicant was high in diligence but low in intelligence, a disability disclosure would cause the participants to rate the intelligence as a more important criterion for being awarded the scholarship; when there was not a disability disclosure, participants would rate intelligence and diligence as equally important (main effect of disability disclosure).

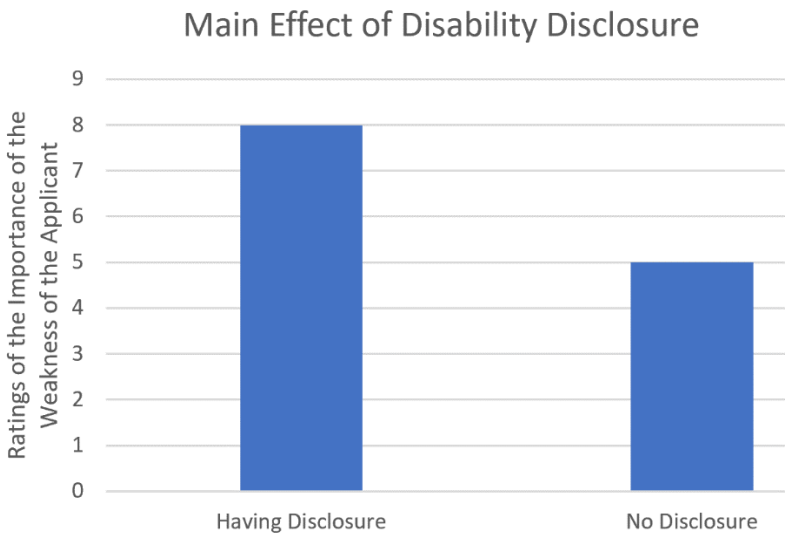

Figure 3

H4: We predicted that, compared with participants in Disclosure Last condition, those in Disclosure First condition would give lower ratings and lower estimated probability of receiving the scholarship (main effect of timing of disability disclosure).

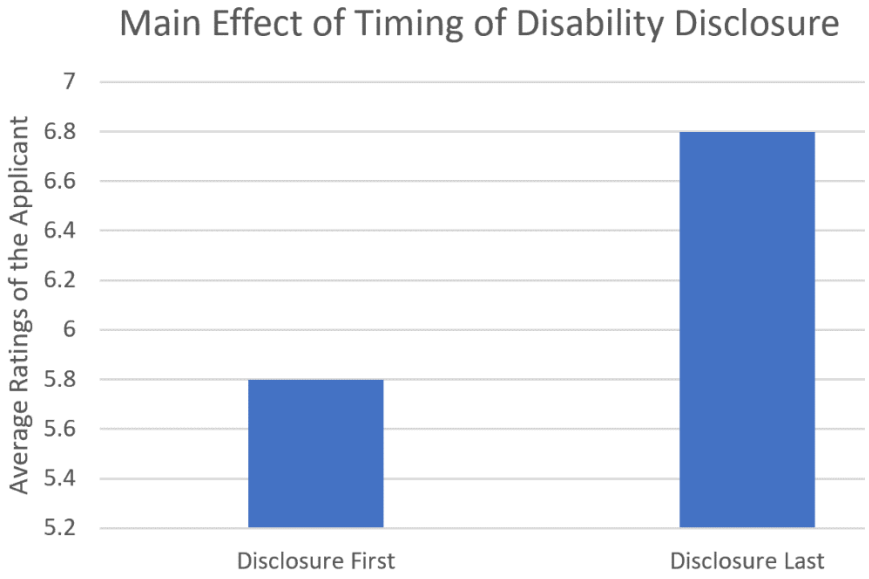

Figure 4

H5: We predicted that the discrepancy in ratings from participants in Disclosure First condition and those from Disclosure Last condition would be salient when the applicants are strong, but trivial when the applicants were weak (interaction between time of disability disclosure and levels of qualification of applicants).

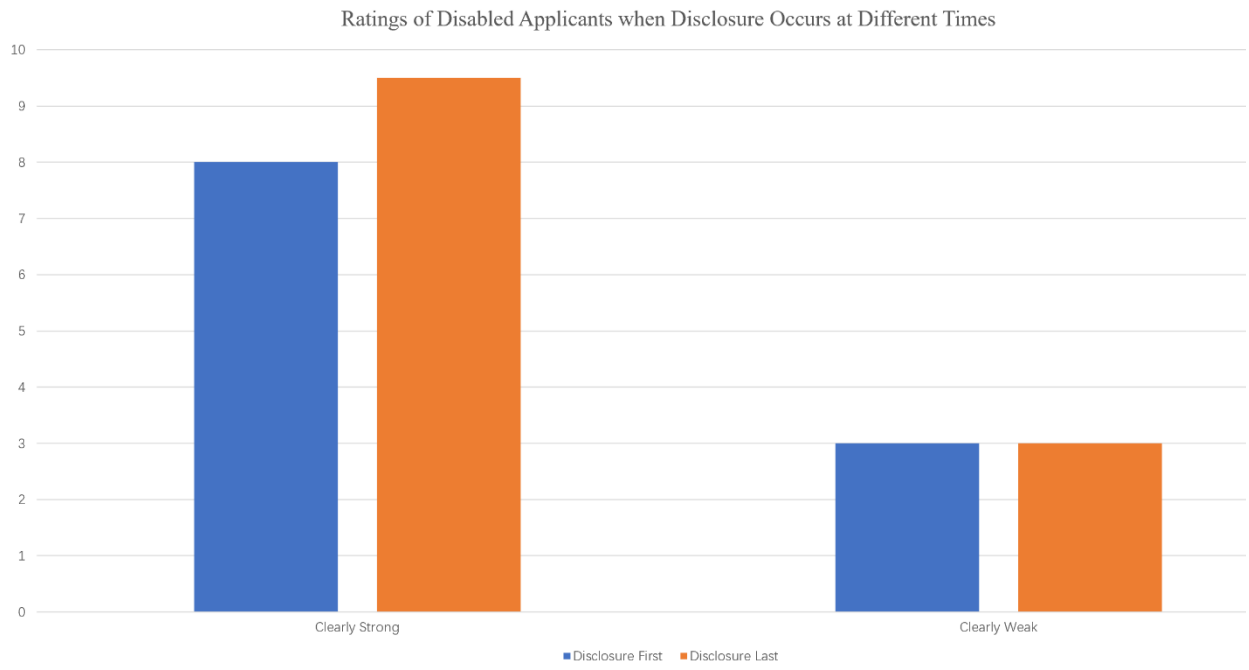

Figure 5

Method

Design

We pre-registered the five hypotheses of the study on the Open Science Framework (https://osf.io/v8pke/).

Participants were randomly assigned to one of 12 conditions: four levels of qualification of the target (blind) applicant (clearly strong, clearly weak, high in diligence but low in intelligence, high in intelligence but low in diligence) X three levels of disability disclosure

(Disclosure First, Disclosure Last, No Disclosure). In each condition, participants read the profile of three male applicants for a WWU scholarship, one of whom was the target applicant; the other two applicants were nondescript distractors. The application materials of each applicant included a brief self-introduction letter from each applicant, a high school transcript, and an academic report card, and if there was a disclosure of blindness, it was always in the self-introduction letter. For participants in the Disclosure First conditions, the self-introduction letter was shown to the participants first; for those in the Disclosure Last conditions, the self-introduction letter was shown to the participants after they had read applicants' high school transcript and academic report card; for those in the No Disclosure condition, instead of mention of his physical condition, the target applicant said that he was a member of school swimming team in his self-introduction, and the presentation of application materials was in random order. Thus, the target applicant was portrayed as clearly strong, clearly weak, or mixed (intelligent but lazy or diligent but unintelligent). His level of qualification was explicitly stated and/or implied through his self-introduction, his transcript, and comments from his instructors (see Appendix A, B, and C for related materials).

Participants

We recruited undergraduate students at Western Washington University through the SONA system. Since we used a 3 X 4 between-subject design, a power analysis using G*Power (Erdfelder et al., 1996) suggested that we need to recruit at least 341 participants to have 90% power to observe a medium effect size of the hypothesized interaction effects.

We recruited 389 WWU undergraduate students (199 *women and 193 men*, *M_age* = 20) to participate in the study. As a manipulation check, in the end of the study, we asked participants in the disability disclosure conditions and those in the control conditions whether

they noticed that one of the three applicants was blind. Data from 33 participants who failed the manipulation check were omitted from further analysis leaving a final sample size of 356 (186 *women and 170 men*, *M_age* = 19.94).

Materials

We conducted a pilot study as a manipulation check of the study materials we created for the primary study. We fabricated application profiles for four applicants to the *Western Award for Excellence*, a scholarship available to Western undergraduate freshmen. For each applicant, the application profile includes a brief self-introduction, a high school transcript, and an academic report card. We intended to portray these four applicants as clearly strong (high in both intelligence and diligence), clearly weak (low in both intelligence and diligence), or as having mixed qualifications (one high in intelligence but low in diligence and one low in intelligence but high in diligence). The aim of the pilot study was to determine whether participants' evaluation of these four applicants matched the intended qualifications. We recruited 43 Western undergraduate students and asked them to read the application profiles for these applicants. We then asked participants to rate these applicants regarding their diligence, intelligence, and levels of qualification on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 = very lazy, unintelligent, or unqualified, 10 = very diligent, intelligent, or qualified).

Three within-subject ANOVAs were conducted on participants' evaluations of applicants' intelligence, diligence, and levels of qualification. The results showed that participants rated the four applicants differently regarding their intelligence ($F(3,126) = 61.95$, $p < 0.05$), diligence *(*$F(3,126) = 64.36$, $p < 0.01$), and levels of qualification ($F(3,126) = 80.58$, $p < 0.01$). Follow-up paired-sample t-tests suggest that our manipulation was successful: the clearly strong applicant was rated as more intelligent, more diligent, and more qualified than other three

applicants; the clearly weak applicant was rated as lazier, more unintelligent, and more unqualified than three other applicants; the diligent but unintelligent applicants were rated as more diligent but less intelligent than the intelligent but lazy applicant. Unexpectedly, the diligent but unintelligent applicant was rated as more qualified than the intelligent but lazy applicant. This may indicate that diligence is perceived as a more important qualification for academic success than intelligence in this sample. When we interpreted the results for the primary study, we considered the differences in ratings of these two ambiguously qualified applicants.

Procedure

The study was administered online. At the beginning, all participants were told that the aim of the current project was to evaluate the admission decisions made by the admission committee of *Western Award for Excellence* this year, and they read the profiles of three undergraduate applicants. The order of the presentation of application materials was determined by which disclosure condition participants were assigned to. Immediately after reading these application materials of each applicant, participants were asked to report the applicant's academic performance and physical condition and rate the overall qualifications of each applicant on a 10-point scale (1 = terrible, 10 = Excellent). Then, we asked participants to imagine if they were the admission officers, whether they would award the applicants with the scholarship (Yes or No). Next, participants were asked to report the importance of applicants' diligence and intelligence for being awarded the scholarship on 10-point scales (1 = Extremely unimportant, 10 = Extremely Important). In addition, since we wanted to measure participants' attitudes toward individuals with disabilities as a covariate in the analyses, participants were asked to complete the Multidimensional Attitudes Scale Toward Persons With Disabilities

(Findler et al., 2007; see Appendix E), which had been shown to be a valid explicit measure of both sighted and blind individuals' attitudes toward blindness (Rowland & Bell, 2012). In the end, participants were debriefed of the true purpose of the current study and were thanked for their participation.

Results

Participants were asked to rate how qualified they thought the applicants were and how strongly they believed that the applicants should be awarded the scholarship on a scale from 1 to 10. Responses to these questions were highly correlated ($r(325) = 0.90$, $p < 0.001$), so we averaged participants' responses to those two items to create a new variable representing participants' evaluation of the applicants.

Three different analyses were conducted to test the five hypotheses. The first analysis focused on H1 and H2. To examine the effect of a disclosure of blindness (no disclosure or having disclosure) and its interaction with applicants' levels of qualification (clearly strong, clearly weak, or ambiguously qualified) on the rating of the target individual, we conducted a 2X3 ANOVA. For this analysis, participants in the Disclosure First and Disclosure Last conditions were grouped together as having disclosure, and conditions in which the target individual had mixed qualifications (high in diligence but low in intelligence or high in intelligence but low in diligence) were grouped together as ambiguously qualified.

In H1, we predicted that having a disability disclosure would cause people to view the target individual more negatively. Most strikingly, contrary with our first hypothesis, participants who were told that the target individual was blind rated him more positively ($M = 6.75$, $SD = 0.11$) than those who were not told he was blind ($M = 5.99$, $SD = 0.15$; $MS\_disclosure = 37.65$, $MSE =$

2.25, $F(1, 321) = 16.72$, $p < 0.01$). Also, unsurprisingly, there was a main effect of applicants' levels of qualification, with applicants with strong qualifications (*M_strong* = 9.20, *SD* = 0.17) rated higher than those with ambiguous qualifications (*M_ambiguously qualified* = 6.71, *SD* = 0.13) and those with weak qualifications, (*M_weak* = 3.53, *SD* = 0.17), *MS_qualification* = 593.14, $F(2, 321) = 263.33$, $p < 0.01$).

More importantly, as our core hypothesis testing aversive ablism, in H2, we predicted that a disability disclosure would not influence the evaluation of the target individual when the target individual's qualifications are clearly strong or clearly weak, whereas we predicted that the disabled target individual would be rated lower than a non-disabled applicant when they were ambiguously qualified for being awarded the scholarship. As shown in Figure 6, the results suggest that the effect of the disclosure of blindness varies across different levels of qualification (*MS_disclosure*qualification* = 7.59, $F(2, 321) = 3.37$, $p = 0.04$). Furthermore, three independent-sample t-tests were conducted to examine the simple effects of the disclosure of blindness on participants' evaluation of the target individual when the target individual is clearly strong, clearly weak, and ambiguously qualified. Consistent with our second hypothesis, when the target individual was clearly strong, participants in the no disclosure condition ($M = 9.02$, $SD = 0.32$) did not rate the target individual differently from those in the having disclosure condition ($M = 9.27$, $SD = 0.19$; $t(80) = -1.27$, $p > 0.05$). However, contrary with our second hypothesis, when the target individual was ambiguously qualified, participants in the having disclosure condition ($M = 7.21$, $SD = 0.15$) rated the target individual more positively than those in the no disclosure condition ($M = 5.85$, $SD = 0.20$; $t(156) = -4.74$, $p < 0.001$). Also inconsistent with our second hypothesis, when the target individual was clearly weak, participants in the having

disclosure condition (M = 3.78, SD = 0.20) rated the target individual more positively than those in the no disclosure condition (M = 3.08, SD = 0.27; $t(85) = -1.85$, $p = 0.05$).

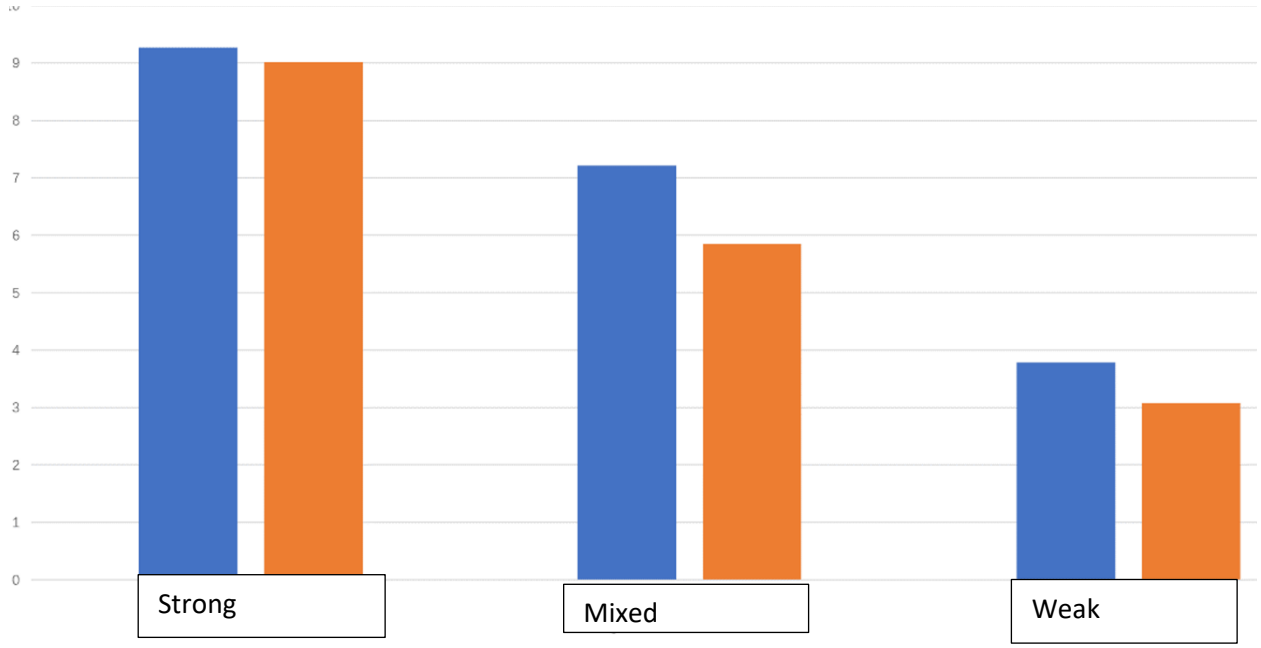

Figure 6

In H3, we predicted that, compared with the weakness of ambiguously qualified applicants who did not disclose a disability, people would rate the weakness of the disabled target individual as a more important criterion for being awarded the scholarship. We conducted an independent-sample tttest to examine the effect of the level of qualification of the target individual (high in diligence but low in intelligence or high in intelligence but low in diligence) on participants' ratings of the importance of the criterion (1 = diligence is a much more important criterion than intelligence for being awarded the scholarship, 10 = intelligence is a much more important criterion than diligence for being awarded the scholarship). Inconsistent with H3, there was not a difference in ratings of diligence/intelligence when the weakness of the

disabled target individual changed from diligence (M = 4.31, SD = 1.45) to intelligence (M = 4.20, SD = 1.56; $M\_difference$ = 0.12, SE = 0.24, $t(110) = 0.41$, $p > 0.05$).

Last but not least, in response to our fourth and fifth hypotheses, we conducted a 2 X 2 ANOVA to examine the effect of the time of disclosure and its interaction with applicants' levels of qualification on participants' evaluation of the target individual. Since our fourth hypothesis focused on the time of the disclosure, we removed data from participants who were in the no disclosure condition for these analyses; since our fifth hypothesis is only relevant with the target individual who was clearly strong or clearly weak, we removed data from participants who encountered the target individual who was ambiguously qualified. To clarify, the same dataset is used to test H4 and H5, using a different subset of conditions from those used to test H1 and H2. In H4, we predicted that being compared with having the disability disclosure at the beginning, having the disability disclosure after impression formation would result in a better evaluation of the target individual. As shown in Figure 7, consistent with our fourth hypothesis, participants in the Disclosure Last condition (M = 6.81, SD = 0.15) rated the target individual more positively than those in the Disclosure First condition (M = 6.23, SD = 0.15; MS_time = 9.60, MSE = 1.27, $F(1L\ 112) = 7.58$, $p < 0.01$). In addition, unsurprisingly, the clearly strong target individual was rated more positively than the clearly weak target individual ($MS\_qualification$ = 879.07, $F(1, 112) = 693;79$, $p < 0.001$). Finally, in H5, we hypothesized that the effect of the time of disability disclosure would be stronger when the target individual was clearly strong. However, inconsistent with our fifth hypothesis, there was not an interaction between time of disclosure and levels of qualification of the target individual ($MS\_time*qualification$ = 0.86, $F(1, 121) = 0.68$, $p > 0.05$), suggesting that the effect of the time of disclosure did not differ across different levels of qualification of the target individual.

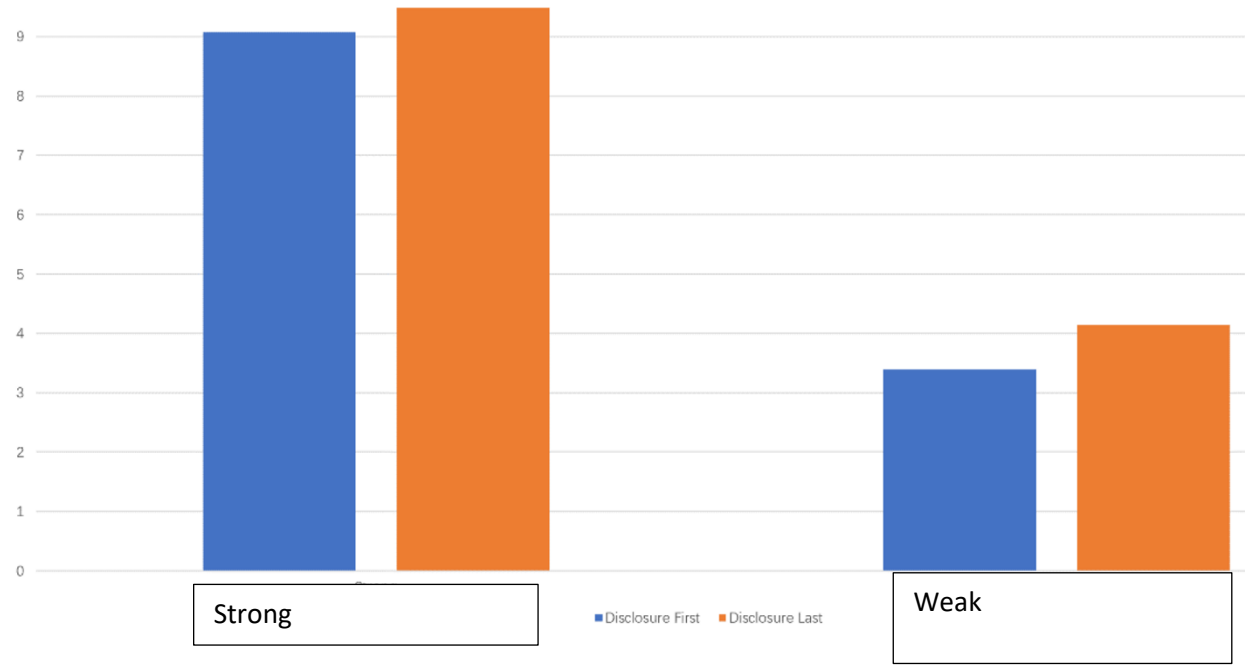

Figure 7

Discussion

In summary, contrary to our hypothesis, instead of being a stigma for the applicants, our results suggest that a disclosure of blindness was more like a benefit for those applicants. Participants rated applicants who disclosed that they were blind more positively than those without a blindness disclosure. With the assumption that having a disability is a stigma for individuals with disabilities, in our second hypothesis, we predicted that when the applicants were clearly strong or clearly weak, there would not be a difference in the evaluations of applicants who disclosed a disability and those who did not disclose a disability; however, when the applicants were ambiguously qualified, the blind applicants would be rated more negatively than applicants who were not blind. Since our second hypothesis was formed on the basis of our first hypothesis, it is not surprising to find that the relationship between a disclosure of blindness and applicant's level of qualification is inconsistent with our expectation. That is, having a

disclosure of blindness made participants rate the target individual more positively than applicants who could see when the target individual is ambiguously qualified or clearly weak, whereas it did not have an effect when the target individual was clearly strong.

Moreover, since we posited that the time of disability disclosure would influence people's impression formation of the disabled individuals, and we assumed that having a disability would be a stigma, in the fourth hypothesis, we predicted that compared with having a disability disclosure at the beginning of impression formation, having it after impression formation would lead to better evaluations of disabled applicants. The results suggest that, consistent with our fourth hypothesis, disclosing blindness after impression formation made participants rate the target individual more positively than disclosing it before impression formation. However, we failed to find support for our third hypothesis, in which we predicted that compared with applicants who did not disclose a disability, participants would rate the weakness of disabled applicants as a more important criterion for being awarded the scholarship, and also for our fifth hypotheses, in which we predicted that the effect of time of disability disclosure would be greater when the disabled applicants were clearly strong rather than clearly weak.

Aversive Ablism

Based on the findings of the current study, it seems that the expression of prejudice against individuals with disabilities, specifically blindness, is different from that of prejudice against racial minorities. Instead of giving negative ratings to the stigmatized group only when the situations are ambiguous, participants in our study gave positive ratings to the blind applicants even when they ambiguously qualified or clearly weak. Moreover, contrary with our expectation and previous research, the results suggested that participants viewed applicants with

a blindness disclosure more positively than those without a blindness disclosure in general. There are several plausible explanations for these results.

First, it is possible that the results are influenced by the effect of demand characteristics. Although we had a cover story to disguise the true purpose of our study, participants may have still been able to figure out that we really wanted to investigate their attitudes toward individuals with disabilities. For instance, due to the influence of the pandemic, we had to conduct the whole study online. Consequently, participants may not have believed our cover story due to lack of realism. In addition, since all of our participants were students who took psychology courses during data collection, and aversive racism, as a famous psychological phenomenon, might have been covered by participants' instructors, our participants might not be naïve participants, and thus, our cover story may not work for those participants. If our cover story did not work, participants would be likely to infer the real purpose of our study. As we mentioned before, it is not socially acceptable to be prejudiced for most college students in the U.S (Fiske et al., 2002). For the sake of self-presentation, when participants realize that their attitudes and behaviors toward individuals with disabilities are under close observation, they may choose to give ratings that are inconsistent with their authentic attitudes to avoid the risk of appearing to be prejudiced (Plant et al., 2010).

A second explanation for why participants rated blind applicants highly is that people may have truly changed their attitudes toward individuals with disabilities under societal influences and education, at least at an explicit level. Despite abundant research showing that people still hold implicit prejudice against individuals with disabilities (Rohmer & Louvet 2012, 2018; Yin & Lemm, 2020), participants' responses to those implicit measures simply reflect their autonomous subconscious reactions, and these autonomous responses are merely the legacy from

their previous prejudice against individuals with disabilities. In fact, people have truly embraced their unprejudiced self-image and changed their explicit attitudes. It can explain why, when having enough time for consideration, participants gave higher ratings to applicants who are blind.

A third explanation for the preferable evaluations of blind applicants is that the pattern of prejudice expression suggested by the aversive-racism framework, first proposed by Gaertner and Dovidio in 1986, may not still be able to represent the pattern of prejudice expression of today's society. Specifically, it is possible that aversive-racism framework successfully characterized people's prejudice expression in the last century, but does not apply now. Nevertheless, with the spread of political correctness on social media among college students in the last two decades (Fiske et al., 2002), people's prejudice expression may have been upgraded. People become more vigilant when they are aware that they are under observation and more meticulous about their attitude expression. When encountering situations in which people have to express their attitudes toward minority groups, they may provide responses that are opposite with their authentic attitudes since they feel they are at risk of being accused of being prejudiced. In that case, the pattern of expression of prejudice we found in the current study may reflect how people express their attitudes toward minority groups in today's society.

Time Effect of Disability Disclosure

Another important finding of the current study is that participants rated applicants with blindness more positively when the blindness disclosure occurred at the end of impression formation compared to when it occurred at the beginning of impression formation. Our fourth hypothesis successfully predicted this result but it does not necessarily suggest that our theoretical explanation supporting our fourth hypothesis is tenable. Initially, we posited that

when disability disclosure occurred at the beginning of impression formation, it would function like a filter of later information. Thus, we predicted that, under the influence of their ingrained negative prejudice against individuals with disabilities, participants would have lower expectations and would give lower ratings to applicants with blindness. In contrast, we predicted that when the disability disclosure occurred in the end of impression formation, it would not influence the processing of other information about the applicants, and thus, evaluations of applicants with blindness would solely be influenced by the level of qualification of the applicants when the blindness disclosure occurred in the end. Nonetheless, in the current study, we found that participants rated applicants who disclosed that they were blind more positively than those who did not, suggesting that the assumption of theoretical explanation for the fourth hypothesis is violated. Thus, though the result is consistent with our prediction, we need another explanation for this finding. One feasible explanation is the recency effect. The recency effect it is the tendency to remember the most recently presented information best (Murdock, 1962). Since the results suggest that having a disability serves as a benefit for blind individuals, this could explain why compared with disclosing a disability at the beginning, disclosing it in the end led to better evaluations of disabled applicants. An important implication of the current study is that for individuals who want to disclosure their disabilities, it may be more beneficial to disclosure their disability in the end of their school or job application.、

Limitations

Neither H3 nor H5 were supported by the current study. The most plausible explanation is that these hypotheses are not tenable. That is, participants did not go through the psychological processes suggested by our H3 and H5. However, it is also possible that we failed to detect these effects due to limitations of the current study.

The most salient limitation of the current study is the high failure rate of the manipulation check. Due to the spread of COVID-19, the whole study had to be conducted online. Thus, it is possible that participants did not pay enough attention when doing the study. A piece of evidence supporting this speculation is that about 10% of participants did not pass the manipulation check, and all of these participants were in one of the disclosure conditions. In the end of the study, all participants were asked to report whether one of the applicants they evaluated was blind. To "pass" the manipulation check, participants in the disclosure conditions needed to respond that they noticed one of the applicants was blind, while participants in the no disclosure conditions needed to report that they did not notice that one applicant was blind. As a result, the manipulation check was more difficult in experimental conditions, which may explain why all those participants who failed the check were in the experimental conditions. High failure rate of manipulation checek is the most concerning flaw in our study. What's more, conducting the whole study online also cause the concern for demand characteristics, which we have already mentioned above.

In addition, another limitation of the current study is that we did not include implicit measures of participants' attitudes toward individuals with disabilities. Since participants' explicit attitudes toward individuals with disabilities were completely opposite with our first hypothesis, which potentially led to the failure of our second hypothesis, it would be particularly important and interesting to examine whether participants' implicit attitudes can give us more insights regarding aversive ablism. Nonetheless, since we estimated that it would take participants about 30 minutes to complete the whole study, and we wanted to control the length of the study to ensure participants' attention to our study, we decided to not to include implicit measures for this study. In addition, we wanted to control the complexity of the study design.

Future Research

Given the fact that there are many flaws in the current study, it would be ideal to conduct another study, in which we can eliminate the flaws of the current study, to examine whether the findings of the current study will change. In the next study, we would try to have a larger sample size, include implicit and behavioral measures of participants' attitudes toward individuals with disabilities, and most importantly, conduct the whole study face-to-face.

In addition to addressing the flaws in the current study, future research can also explore other directions. For instance, in the current study, we focused on blindness. Since there are many different types of disabilities (e. g. physical disabilities, psychological disabilities, and intellectual disabilities), and those disabilities impact individuals' lives in different ways, it is very likely that individuals with different types of disabilities are viewed differently. For example, Yin and Lemm (2020) examined people's implicit attitudes toward individuals with deafness, blindness, and mobility impairment using IATs and found that participants' implicit attitudes toward those individuals were not homogenous. Individuals with blindness were viewed most negatively among those individuals. Thus, in future studies, we can shift our attention to other types of disabilities and examine whether the findings of the current study can also be applied to other types of disabilities.

Another direction we can take is to explore the neural correlates of implicit attitudes toward individuals with disabilities. To the best of our knowledge, existing research about neural correlates of implicit attitudes focuses primarily on racial biases, and researchers found that the amygdala, which is involved in fear learning and memory, was modulated when people's implicit attitudes toward members of racial minorities was activated (Chekroud et al., 2014). A prevalent explanation for the association between amygdala and implicit prejudice against

members of racial minorities is that people's implicit racial prejudice is formed because under the influence of their cultures, people learn that members of racial minorities can threaten their physical and financial security, and amygdala, as the brain area responsible for fear learning and memory, is activated when people perceive stimuli related with racial minorities. However, whether the finding in the field of neural correlates of implicit racial prejudice can be applied to neural correlates of implicit attitudes toward individuals with disabilities remains unclear. This is because many individuals with disabilities are not viewed as a threat to people without these disabilities (Fiske et al., 2002). To the contrary, people may feel sympathetic about individuals with disabilities (Barr & Bracchitta, 2015). Thus, if the association between amygdala and implicit racial prejudice is caused by feelings of being threatened, we do not know whether amygdala will still be associated with implicit attitudes toward individuals with disabilities, and it is very interesting to explore it with creative experimental designs.

Conclusion

The current study reveals that people's negative prejudice toward individuals with disabilities may have vanished, and furthermore, individuals with disabilities may even benefit from disclosing a disability, and the benefit is strongest when the disabled individuals are ambiguously qualified. Moreover, it seems that disclosing a disability at the beginning of impression formation will result in the optimal evaluations. Our findings are informative to job or school applicants who have disabilities. Maybe disclosing their disabilities could be beneficial for individuals with disabilities. However, before we draw a definite conclusion, more research is needed to help us gain a deeper understanding of people's attitudes toward individuals with disabilities in the today's society.

Works Cited

Bell, C. & Silverman, A. (2011). Psychometric Investigation of the Social Responsibility about Blindness Scale. *Journal of Blindness Innovation and Research*. *1*(2). Retrieved from: https://www.nfb.org/images/nfb/publications/jbir/jbir11/jbir010204.html

Biernat, M., Vescio, T. K., & Manis, M. (1998). Judging and behaving toward members of stereotyped groups: A shifting standards perspective. In C. Sedikides, J. Schopler, & C. A. Insko (Eds.), *Intergroup cognition and intergroup behavior* (pp. 151-175). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. Retrieved from: https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=S5v6bwQPj8EC&oi=fnd&pg=PA151&dq=Biernat,+M.,+Vescio,+T.+K.,+%26+Manis,+M.+(1998).+Judging+and+behaving++toward+members+of+stereotyped+groups:+A+shifting+standards+per%C2%ADspective.+In+C.+Sedikides,+J.+Schopler,+%26+C.+A.+Insko+(Eds.),+Inter%C2%ADgroup+cognition+and+intergroup+behavior+(pp.+151175)&ots=PqLacl1hDT&sig=UKb9gkyhBJThfMYA_kBPoU_AXMk#v=onepage&q&f=falsE

Bodenhausen, G. V, & Wyer, R. S. (1985). Effects of Stereotypes on Decision Making and Information-Processing Strategies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *48*(2), 267-282. Retrieved from: https://psycnet.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1037%2F0022-3514.48.2.267

Colella, A., De Nisi, A. S., & Varma, A. (1998). The impact of ratee's disability on performance judgments and choice as partner. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83, 102–111. doi:10.1037/0021–9010.83.1.102. Retrieved from: https://psycnet.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1037%2F0021-9010.83.1.102

Dovidio, J. F, & Gaertner, S. L. (2016). Aversive Racism and Selection Decisions: 1989 and 1999. *Psychological Science*, *11*(4), 315-319. Retrieved from: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1467-9280.00262?casa_token=6OXFjEiL2UwAAAAA:6ykLDorOl0tJxYEOz66tP8d_yvbFPdLxTulDA_ua2rtzipj_dRTJM3LvtIeNhLa9UM5zboxtjLaXhG

Dovidio, J. F, & Gaertner, S. L. (2016). Aversive Racism and Selection Decisions: 1989 and 1999. *Psychological Science*, *11*(4), 315-319. Retrieved from: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1111/14679280.00262?casa_token=q1G25pCNs8wAAAAA:PxdocklJKjEOCPxgZ8grQb90aXDK5KagAjcyido9RgVggE7wuHegaNNZwncZdY5oyLQxrTa8hkkyA

Erdfelder, E., Faul, F., & Buchner, A. (1996). GPOWER: A general power analysis program. *Behavior Research Methods, Instruments, & Computers. 28*(1), 1-11. Retrieved from: https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1996-04345-001

Eric L. U., & Geoffrey, L. C. (2005). Constructed Criteria: Redefining Merit to Justify Discrimination. *Psychological Science*, *16*(6), 474-480. Retrieved from: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.0956-7976.2005.01559.x?casa_token=LiwAVQOTvv0AAAAA%3A7tdCNha7wYXFLHlLkPQqrPKe3a01kJKOf-wnvhgVug_LeGGPpDMhBae1aGQWpHHDFvHGPTfsGyko6W

Erickson, W. A., Von Schrader, S., Bruyère, S. M., & VanLooy, S. A. (2014). The Employment Environment. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, *57*(4), 195-208. Retrieved from: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0034355213509841?casa_token=8U0VHQRTx

cMAAAAA%3ADz5HBZEaw0WDQLzxLwrjGkRp10VtCXDo92b3Fmb_Dvf369NSfzWtFkJulk3_qOLIq_yt8sgHYM7q-w

Fichten, C. S., & Amsel, R. (1986). Trait attributions about college students with a physical disability: Circumplex analyses and methodological issues. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 16, 410–427. doi:10.1111/j.1559–1816.1986.tb01149. Retrieved from: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1559-1816.1986.tb01149.X

Fiske, S., Cuddy, A., Glick, P., & Xu, J. (2002). A Model of (Often Mixed) Stereotype Content: Competence and Warmth Respectively Follow From Perceived Status and Competition. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *82*(6), 878-902. https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2002-02942-002

Gaertner, S. L., & Dovidio, J. F. (1986). The aversive form of racism. In J. F. Dovidio & S. L. Gaertner (Eds.), *Prejudice, discrimination, and racism*. (pp. 61-89). Orlando, FL: Academic Press. Retrieved from: https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1986-98698-000

Gouvier, W. D., Sytsma-Jordan, S., & Mayville, S. (2003). Patterns of discrimination in hiring job applicants with disabilities: The role of disability type, job complexity, and public contact. *Rehabilitation Psychology*, 48, 175–181. doi:10.1037/0090-5550.48.3.175. Retrieved from: https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2003-99990-007

Greenwald, A. G., et al. "Understanding and Using the Implicit Association Test: I. An Improved Scoring Algorithm." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. *85*, no. 2, 2003, pp. 197–216. https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2003-05897-003

Gregg, A. P, Seibt, B., & Banaji, M. R. (2006). Easier Done Than Undone. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *90*(1), 1-20. Retrieved from: https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2006-01254-001?doi=1

Hodson, G., Dovidio, J. F., & Gaertner, S. L. (2016). Processes in Racial Discrimination: Differential Weighting of Conflicting Information. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*, *28*(4), 460-471. Retrieved from: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0146167202287004?casa_token=_qcwek3BvzwAAAAA:dIu4pMQ-i1vRKsGxxWnOeq3sSdx_rzdjXM7CMPM4Qm4c2KYlwU-bJQbYOiVryu9FnqN1ZJQN319VMW

Kluegel, J. R., & Smith, E. R. (1986). Beliefs about inequality: America's views of what is and what ought to be. *New York: Aldine de Gruyter*.Retrived from: https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=LKw0DwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PR9&dq=Kluegel,+J.+R.,+%26+Smith,+E.+R.+(1986).+Beliefs+about+inequality:+America's++views+of+what+is+and+what+ou&ots=quofMy0is7&sig=1HYBzrqQSwQZ7Xpr2fVRa7_6a8I#v=onepage&q&f=false

Louvet, E. (2007). Social judgment toward job applicants with disabilities: Perception of personal qualities and competences. *Rehabilitation Psychology*, 52, 297–303. doi:10.1037/0090–5550.52.3.297. Retrieved from: https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2007-12188-007

Louvet, E., & Rohmer, O. (2010). Are workers with disability perceived as competent? *Psychologie du Travail et des Organisations*, 16, 47–62. Retrieved from:

https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=Are+workers+with+++disability+perceived+as+competent%3F&btnG=

National Center for Education Statistics. (2019) *Students With Disabilities*. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cgg.asp

Pearson, A. R., Dovidio, J. F., & Gaertner, S. L. (2009). The Nature of Contemporary Prejudice: Insights from Aversive Racism. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, *3*(3), 314-338. Retrieved from: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2009.00183.x

Petty, R. E., Tormala, Z. L., Briñol, P., & Jarvis, W., Blair, G. (2006). Implicit Ambivalence From Attitude Change. *Journal of Personality and Social Psycholo*gy, *90*(1), 21-41. Retrieved from: https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2006-01254-002

Ravaud, J., Madiot, B., & Ville, I. (1992). Discrimination towards disabled people seeking employment. *Social Science & Medicine* (1982), 35(8), 951-958. Retrieved from: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/027795369290234H

Roese, N. J., & Jamieson, D. W. (1993). Twenty years of bogus pipeliner research: A critical review and meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 114, 363-375. Retrieved from: https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1994-01577-001

Rohmer, O., & Louvet, E. (2012). Implicit measures of the stereotype content associated with disability. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *51*(4), 732-740. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/20448309/2012/51/4

Rohmer, O., & Louvet, E. (2018). Implicit stereotyping against people with disability. *Group Processes Intergroup Relations*, *21*(1),127140. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1368430216638536

Rowland, M. & Bell, E. (2012). Measuring the Attitudes of Sighted College Students toward Blindness. *Journal of Blindness Innovation and Research*. *2(*2). Retrieved from: https://www.nfb.org/images/nfb/publications/jbir/jbir12/jbir020202.html

Rydell, R. J., & McConnell, A. R. (2006). Understanding Implicit and Explicit Attitude Change. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *91*(6), 995-1008. Retrieved from: https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2006-21634-001

Spirito Dalgin, R., & Bellini, J. (2008). Invisible Disability Disclosure in an Employment Interview: Impact on Employers' Hiring Decisions and Views of Employability. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin, 52*(1), 6-15. https://onesearch.library.wwu.edu/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=TN_sage_s10_1177_0034355207311311&context=PC&vid=WWU&lang=en_US&search_scope=All&adaptor=primo_central_multiple_fe&tab=everything&query=any,contains,Invisible%20Disability%20Disclosure%20in%20%20an%20Employment%20Intervie&offset=0

Taylor, S. E., & Crocker, J. (1981). Schematic bases of social information processing. In E. T. Higgins, C. P. Herman, & M. P. Zanna (Eds.), Social cognition: The Ontario symposium (*Vol. 1*, pp. 89-134). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum. Retrieved from: https://scholar.google.com/citations?hl=en&user=d9gOvWMAAAAJ&view_op=list_works&sortby=pubdate#d=gs_md_citad&u=%2Fcitations%3Fview_op%3Dview_citation%26hl%3D

en%26user%3Dd9gOvWMAAAAJ%26cstart%3D800%26pagesize%3D100%26sortby%3Dpubdate%26citation_for_view%3Dd9gOvWMAAAAJ%3AIjCSPb-OGe4C%26tzom%3D-480

Youth, Disclosure, and the Workplace Why, When, What, and How. (2017). Retrieved from: https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/publications/fact-sheets/youth-disclosure-and-the-workplace-why-when-what-and-hoW

Appendix A: Application Materials of the Strong Applicant

Self-introduction Letter

Dear Admissions Committee,

My name is Ben Stephen, and I am a senior student at Wayland High School. (I am legally blind.) I believe I am a strong candidate for the *Western Award to Excellence* scholarship. Academics has been my primary focus throughout high school. My overall unweighted GPA of 3.91 places me in the top 5% of my class (rank 435/451). I have already completed five AP courses, and I am currently taking AP Physics B, AP Biology, and AP Calculus C. Whenever I can, I prefer to sit near the front of the room so that I can interact directly with the teacher as much as possible. I am very excited about attending college next year, and this scholarship will go a long way toward helping me achieve this goal. Thank you very much for considering me.

High School Transcript

STUDENT: Ben Stephen

PARENT: Frank Stephen APID: 12276674

ADDRESS: 112 West Wood Street

SASID: 59694143

CITY: Boston STATE : MA ZIP: 87678

PHONE: 8605777652 SEX : M

DOB: 01/30/2002

GR:YEAR	#	COURSE	LG	CREDIT
09:15-16 Fall	135	PE/HEALTH	A	1.00
09:15-16 Fall	172	ENGLISH	A-	1.00
09:15-16 Fall	201	GEOMETRY	A	1.00
09:15-16 Spring	235	POLITICS	A	1.00
09:15-16	244	MATHEMATICS	A	1.00

Spring				
09:15-16	296	Algebra	A	1.00
Spring				

GR:YEAR	#	COURSE	LG	CREDIT
10:16-17	290	FRENCH	A	1.00
Fall				
10:16-17	272	MUSIC	A-	1.00
Fall				
10:16-17	303	CHEMSTRY	A	1.00
Fall				
10:16-17	335	ENGLISH	B+	1.00
Spring				
10:16-17	395	MATHEMATICS	A	1.00
Spring				
10:16-17	335	BIOLOGY	A	1.00
Spring				

GR:YEAR	#	COURSE	LG	CREDIT
11:17-18 Fall	AP	ENGLISH	A-	1.00
11:17-18 Fall	AP	CALCULUS I	A	1.00
11:17-18 Fall	AP	PHILOSOPHY	A	1.00
11:17-18 Spring	435	GEOMETRY	A	1.00
11:17-18 Spring	425	MUSIC	A	1.00
11:17-18 Spring	456	POLITICS	A	1.00

GR:YEAR	#	COURSE	LG	CREDIT
12:18-19 Fall	AP	CALCULUS II	A-	1.00
12:18-19 Fall	AP	PSYCHOLOGY	A	1.00
12:18-19 Fall	AP	PHYSICS AB	A	1.00
12:18-19 Spring	405	CHEMSTRY	NA	1.00

12:18-19	472	PE/HEALTH	NA	1.00
Spring				
12:18-19	488	MUSIC	NA	1.00
Spring				

Date Printed: February 26, 2019

ACADEMIC STANDING

RANK	GPA	CREDITS
435/451	3.91/4.00	24

Anticipated Date of Graduation: June 23, 2019

Academic Report Card

STUDENT: Ben Stephen

PARENT: Frank Stephen APID: 12276674

ADDRESS: 112 West Wood Street

SASID: 59694143

CITY: Boston STATE : MA ZIP: 87678

PHONE: 8605777652 SEX : M

DOB: 01/30/2002

SEMESTER: Fall 2018

Wayland High School

	AP Calculus II	AP Psychology	AP Physics AB
Quiz (%)	99.7	99.8	100
Mid-Term Exam (%)	100	100	100
Final Exam (%)	99	100	100
Class Attendance Grade （%）	100	100	100
In-Class Participation Grade (%)	98	00	100
Homework Assignment Grade	97	98	100

(%)			
Instructor's Comments	He is clearly quite intelligent and hardworking.	I recommend that he take additional psychology classes in college.	He is very focused in class.

Appendix B: Application Materials of the Weak Applicant

Self-introduction Letter

Dear Admissions Committee,

My name is Jordan Miller and I am just starting my senior year at Pane Creek High School. (I am legally blind.) In terms of my personal philosophy, I am most inspired by my grandfather, Bob Miller. Grandpa Bob died last year, and he said that no one who is dying looks back on life and wishes they had spent more time working. I try to apply myself in school, because obviously I want to get out of here, but I'm glad that I'm young and still able to have a balance between work and having really great friendships and enjoying all that life has to offer. I am on track to graduate in the spring with an unweighted GPA of 2.52, and a class ranking of 110/297. I'm looking forward to having a lot of life-changing experiences in college. Getting the *Western Award to Excellence* scholarship would be really helpful for me to be able to pursue my dreams.

High School Transcript

STUDENT: Jordan Miller

PARENT: Karen Miller APID: 72476674

ADDRESS: 2243 US Highway SASID: 69493243

CITY: Colorado Springs STATE : CO

ZIP: 80908

PHONE: 2244364567 SEX : M

DOB: 07/12/2002

GR:YEAR	#	COURSE	LG	CREDIT
09:15-16 Fall	101	PE/HEALTH	B-	1.00
09:15-16 Fall	101	ENGLISH	C-	1.00
09:15-16 Fall	135	GEOMETRY	C	1.00
09:15-16 Spring	142	POLITICS	B-	1.00

09:15-16 Spring	155	MATHEMATICS	B-	1.00
09:15-16 Spring	166	History	B-	1.00

GR:YEAR	#	COURSE	LG	CREDIT
10:16-17 Fall	202	FRENCH	C	1.00
10:16-17 Fall	235	MUSIC	B-	1.00
10:16-17 Fall	272	CHEMSTRY	C+	1.00
10:16-17 Spring	222	ENGLISH	B-	1.00
10:16-17 Spring	245	MATHEMATICS	C+	1.00
10:16-17 Spring	212	BIOLOGY	B-	1.00

GR:YEAR	#	COURSE	LG	CREDIT
11:17-18	303	ENGLISH	B-	1.00
Fall				
11:17-18	312	CALCULUS I	B-	1.00
Fall				
11:17-18	335	PHILOSOPHY	B-	1.00
Fall				
11:17-18	342	GEOMETRY	B-	1.00
Spring				
11:17-18	350	MUSIC	C+	1.00
Spring				
11:17-18	367	POLITICS	C	1.00
Spring				

GR:YEAR	#	COURSE	LG	CREDIT
12:18-19	402	PE/HEALTH	B-	1.00
Fall				
12:18-19	435	MUSIC	B-	1.00
Fall				
12:18-19	473	GEOMETRY	C-	1.00
Fall				
12:18-19	424	CHEMSTRY	NA	1.00
Spring				

12:18-19	450	PSYCHOLOGY	NA	1.00
Spring				
12:18-19	456	CALCULUS II	NA	1.00
Spring				

Date Printed: February 26, 2019

ACADEMIC STANDING

RANK	GPA	CREDITS
110/297	2.52/4.00	24

Anticipated Date of Graduation: June 23, 2019

Academic Report Card

STUDENT: Jordan Miller

PARENT: Karen Miller APID: 72476674

ADDRESS: 2243 US Highway

SASID: 69493243

CITY: Colorado Springs STATE : CO

ZIP: 80908

PHONE: 2244364567 SEX : M

DOB: 07/12/2002

SEMESTER: Fall 2018

	PE/HEALTH 402	MUSIC 435	GEOMETRY 473
Quiz (%)	62	55	63
Mid-Term Exam (%)	67	60	54
Final Exam (%)	59	51	69
Class Attendance Grade （%）	70	65	63
In-Class Participation Grade (%)	62	71	43
Homework Assignment Grade	61	66	67

(%)			
Instructor's Comments	He missed a lot of class meetings and barely finished required exercises during the class. I think it is essential for him to adjust his attitude toward his classes.	This course might not be a good fit for him. Frankly speaking, he did not exhibit much talent in music.	He struggled to understand important concepts, and I definitely think he needs to spend more effort in this class.

Appendix C: Application Materials of the Intelligent but Lazy Applicant

Self-introduction Letter

Dear Admissions Committee,

My name is Eric Williams, and I am a senior at Darien High School. (I am legally blind.) I am excited about going to college next year because, to be honest, I don't feel like I'm being challenged enough in high school to reach my potential. I'm ready for a more engaging experience, and the *Western Award to Excellence* scholarship will help me expand my horizons. My unweighted GPA is 3.25, with a rank of 488/754. I realize that my GPA may not be as high as some applicants, but I don't think GPA is a good measure of my true intelligence because I actually get A's on almost all of my tests, even ones when I don't study that much. I am willing to go to class and put the work in when it's a subject that I truly care about, and I expect that my grades will be higher in college because I'll only have focus on the topics that interest me most.

High School Transcript

STUDENT: Eric Williams

PARENT: Kipling Williams

APID: 12276674

ADDRESS: 112 Route 183

SASID: 59694143

CITY: Darien STATE : CT ZIP: 06283

PHONE: 4015731912 SEX : M

DOB: 05/24/2002

Darien High School

GR:YEAR	#	COURSE	LG	CREDIT
09:15-16 Fall	101	PE/HEALTH	B+	1.00
09:15-16 Fall	101	ENGLISH	B-+	1.00
09:15-16 Fall	135	GEOMETRY	B+	1.00
09:15-16	142	POLITICS	B-+	1.00

Spring				
09:15-16	155	MATHEMATICS	B+	1.00
Spring				
09:15-16	174	Sociology	A	1.00
Spring				

GR:YEAR	#	COURSE	LG	CREDIT
10:16-17	202	FRENCH	B	1.00
Fall				
10:16-17	235	MUSIC	B+	1.00
Fall				
10:16-17	272	CHEMSTRY	A-	1.00
Fall				
10:16-17	222	ENGLISH	B+	1.00
Spring				
10:16-17	245	MATHEMATICS	A-	1.00
Spring				
10:16-17	212	BIOLOGY	B+	1.00
Spring				

GR:YEAR	#	COURSE	LG	CREDIT
11:17-18	303	ENGLISH	B	1.00

Fall				
11:17-18	312	CALCULUS I	B	1.00
Fall				
11:17-18	335	PHILOSOPHY	B+	1.00
Fall				
11:17-18	342	GEOMETRY	B+	1.00
Spring				
11:17-18	350	MUSIC	B+	1.00
Spring				
11:17-18	367	POLITICS	B+	1.00
Spring				

GR:YEAR	#	COURSE	LG	CREDIT
12:18-19	402	PE/HEALTH	B+	1.00
Fall				
12:18-19	435	MUSIC	B	1.00
Fall				
12:18-19	473	GEOMETRY	B	1.00
Fall				
12:18-19	424	CHEMSTRY	NA	1.00
Spring				
12:18-19	450	PSYCHOLOGY	NA	1.00
Spring				

12:18-19 456 CALCULUS II NA 1.00

Spring

Date Printed: February 26, 2019

ACADEMIC STANDING

RANK	GPA	CREDITS
488/754	3.25/4.00	24

Anticipated Date of Graduation: June 23, 2019

Academic Report Card

STUDENT: Allan Tyler

PARENT: James Tyler APID: 32176674

ADDRESS: 543 Route 169

SASID: 576756143

CITY: Darien STATE : CT ZIP: 06281

PHONE: 4012562531 SEX : M

DOB: 06/31/2002

SEMESTER: Fall 2018

Darien High School

	PE/HEALTH 402	MUSIC 435	GEOMETRY 473
Quiz (%)	61	65	56
Mid-Term Exam (%)	55	64	59
Final Exam (%)	49	58	70
Class Attendance Grade (%)	100	100	100
In-Class Participation Grade (%)	96	99	100
Homework Assignment Grade	90	95	97

(%)			
Instructor's Comments	His exam scores were merely satisfactory, but I admire the time and effort he put into this class.	It is easy to underestimate his aptitude by simply looking at his exam grades. In fact, he is the most hardworking student in thisy class.	He has made a great effort in this class, but he struggles with spatial intelligence.

Appendix D: Application Materials of the Diligent but Unintelligent Applicant

Self-introduction Letter

Dear Admissions Committee,

My name is Allan Tyler, and I am a senior at Darien High School. (I am legally blind.) I am proud of my accomplishments in high school and I am excited about being able to apply myself in a college environment starting next year. Even though classes can sometimes be challenging, I love going to school, and my teachers have told me that I am one of the hardest working students in their classes. My work has paid off since I currently have a 3.28 GPA and I am ranked 490/754 in my school. Receiving the *Western Award to Excellence* scholarship would be great honor, and it would be incredibly helpful for paying for my education.

High School Transcript

STUDENT: AllanTyler

PARENT: James Tyler APID: 32176674

ADDRESS: 543 Route 169

SASID: 576756143

CITY: Darien STATE : CT ZIP: 06281

PHONE: 4012562531 SEX : M

DOB: 06/31/2002

Darien
High School

GR:YEAR	#	COURSE	LG	CREDIT
09:15-16 Fall	101	PE/HEALTH	B+	1.00
09:15-16 Fall	101	ENGLISH	A-	1.00
09:15-16 Fall	135	GEOMETRY	B+	1.00
09:15-16 Spring	142	POLITICS	B+	1.00

09:15-16 Spring	155	MATHEMATICS	B	1.00
09:15-16 Spring	188	Geography	B+	1.00

GR:YEAR	#	COURSE	LG	CREDIT
10:16-17 Fall	202	FRENCH	A	1.00
10:16-17 Fall	235	MUSIC	B+	1.00
10:16-17 Fall	272	CHEMSTRY	B+	1.00
10:16-17 Spring	222	ENGLISH	B	1.00
10:16-17 Spring	245	MATHEMATICS	B	1.00
10:16-17 Spring	212	BIOLOGY	B+	1.00

GR:YEAR	#	COURSE	LG	CREDIT
11:17-18 Fall	303	ENGLISH	B-+	1.00

11:17-18 Fall	312	CALCULUS I	A-	1.00
11:17-18 Fall	335	PHILOSOPHY	B	1.00
11:17-18 Spring	342	GEOMETRY	B+	1.00
11:17-18 Spring	350	MUSIC	B+	1.00
11:17-18 Spring	367	POLITICS	B+	1.00

GR:YEAR	#	COURSE	LG	CREDIT
12:18-19 Fall	402	PE/HEALTH	B+	1.00
12:18-19 Fall	435	MUSIC	B	1.00
12:18-19 Fall	473	GEOMETRY	B-+	1.00
12:18-19 Spring	424	CHEMSTRY	NA	1.00
12:18-19 Spring	450	PSYCHOLOGY	NA	1.00
12:18-19	456	CALCULUS II	NA	1.00

Spring

Date Printed: February 26, 2019

ACADEMIC STANDING

RANK	GPA	CREDITS
490/754	3.28/4.00	24

Anticipated Date of Graduation: June 23, 2019

Academic Report Card

STUDENT: Eric Williams

PARENT: Kipling Williams

APID: 12276674

ADDRESS: 112 Route 183

SASID: 59694143

CITY: Darien STATE : CT ZIP: 06283

PHONE: 4015731912 SEX : M

DOB: 05/24/2002

SEMESTER: Fall 2018

Darien High School

	PE/HEALTH 402	MUSIC 435	GEOMETRY 473
Quiz (%)	93	98	95
Mid-Term Exam (%)	99	100	97
Final Exam (%)	100	97	99
Class Attendance Grade (%)	54	61	58
In-Class Participation Grade (%)	62	65	43
Homework Assignment Grade	61	66	67

(%)			
Instructor's Comments	Unarguably, he is a very smart student. However, he can easily improve his grades by increasing his participation.	Although his attendance was lackluster this semester, his musical talent is really impressive.	He shows great aptitude for geometry, but if he wants to succeed in mathematics, he needs to be more diligent.

APPENDIX: MULTIDIMENSIONAL ATTITUDES SCALE TOWARD PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (MAS)

Vignette:

"Imagine the following situation. Joseph/Michelle went out for lunch with some friends to a coffee shop. A man/woman in a wheelchair, with whom Joseph/Michelle is not acquainted, enters the coffee shop and joins the group. Joseph/Michelle is introduced to this person, and shortly thereafter, everyone else leaves, with only Joseph/Michelle and the man/woman in the wheelchair remaining alone together at the table. Joseph/Michelle has 15 minutes to wait for his/her ride. Try to imagine the situation."

People experience a variety of *emotions* when they are involved in such a situation. In the next column is a list of possible emotions, which may arise before, during, and/or after such a situation. Please rate on each line the likelihood that this *emotion* might arise in Joseph/Michelle.

	Degree of likelihood				
Affect	**Not at all**				**Very much**
1. Tension	1	2	3	4	5
2. Stress	1	2	3	4	5
3. Helplessness	1	2	3	4	5
4. Nervousness	1	2	3	4	5
5. Shame	1	2	3	4	5
6. Relaxation	1	2	3	4	5
7. Serenity	1	2	3	4	5
8. Calmness	1	2	3	4	5
9. Depression	1	2	3	4	5
10. Fear	1	2	3	4	5
11. Upset	1	2	3	4	5
12. Guilt	1	2	3	4	5
13. Shyness	1	2	3	4	5
14. Pity	1	2	3	4	5
15. Disgust	1	2	3	4	5
16. Alertness	1	2	3	4	5

People experience a variety of *cognitions* when they are involved in such a situation. Following is a list of possible thoughts that may arise before, during, and/or after such a situation. Please rate on each line the likelihood that this *cognition* might arise in Joseph/Michelle:

	Degree of likelihood				
Cognition	**Not at all**				**Very much**
1. He/she seems to be an interesting guy/girl.	1	2	3	4	5
2. He/she looks like an OK person.	1	2	3	4	5
3. We may get along really well.	1	2	3	4	5
4. He/she looks friendly.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I enjoy meeting new people.	1	2	3	4	5
6. He/she will enjoy getting to know me.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I can always talk with him/her about things that interest both of us.					
8. I can make him/her feel more comfortable.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Why not get to know him/her better?	1	2	3	4	5
10. He/she will appreciate it if I start a conversation.	1	2	3	4	5

People experience a variety of *behaviors* when they are involved in such a situation. Following is a list of possible behaviors that may arise before, during, and/or after such a situation. Please rate on each line the likelihood that Joseph/Michelle would *behave* in the following manner:

	Degree of likelihood				
Behavior	**Not at all**				**Very much**
1. Move away	1	2	3	4	5
2. Get up and leave	1	2	3	4	5
3. Read the newspaper or talk on a cell phone	1	2	3	4	5
4. Continue what he/she was doing	1	2	3	4	5
5. Find an excuse to leave	1	2	3	4	5
6. Move to another table	1	2	3	4	5
7. Initiate a conversation if he/she doesn't make the first move					
8. Start a conversation	1	2	3	4	5